NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

THE

bulletin

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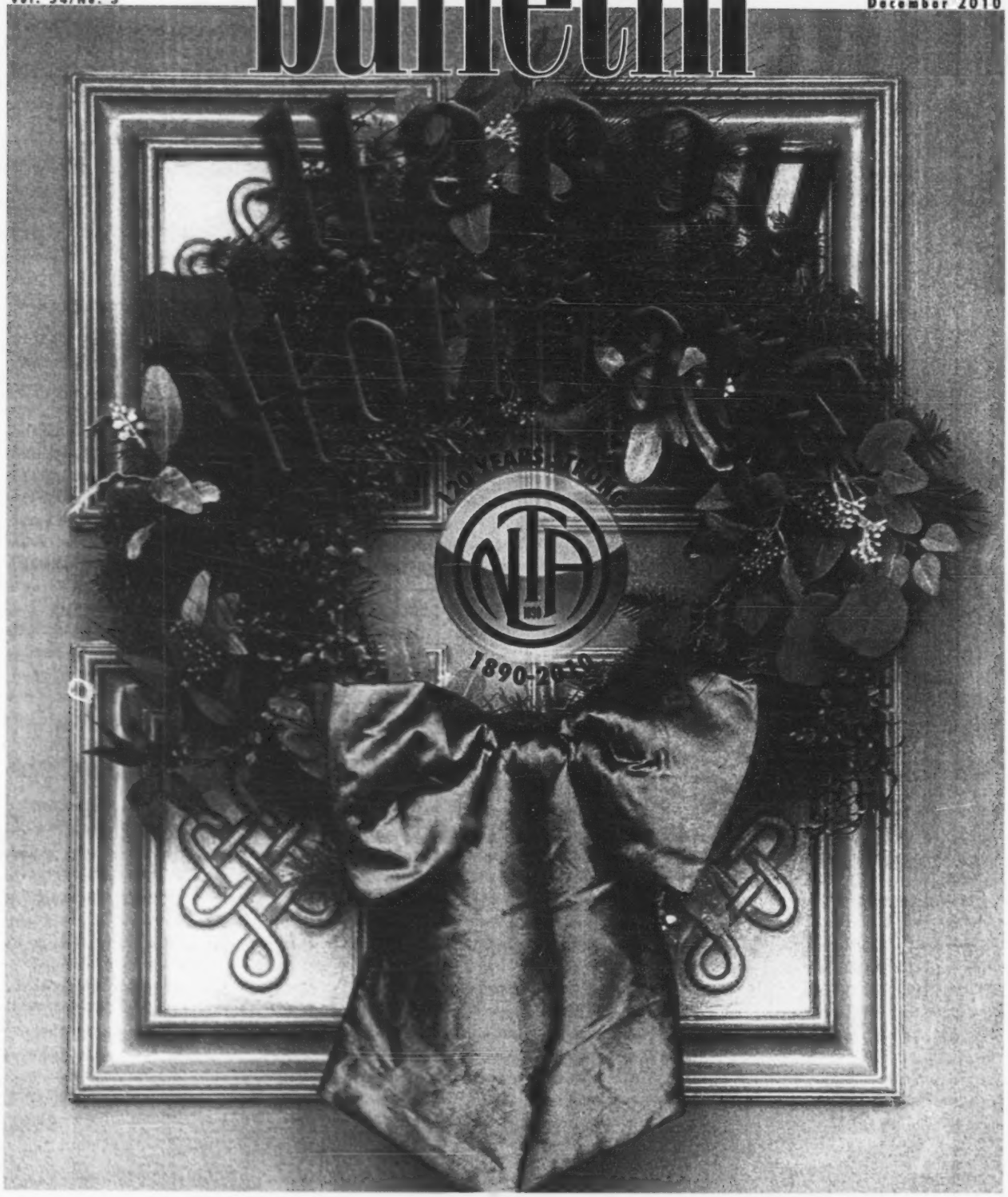

Up Front from the President

The holiday season can be captivating – the decorations and festive music, the many colourful displays in store windows, the thrill and exuberance of children, writing greeting cards, buying gifts and the excitement of spending some quality time with family and friends. With all of this anticipation, however, it seems to me that the Christmas season just creeps up on us. The Halloween candy are still in sale bins and set up next to them are Christmas displays. At a local Starbucks in St. John's I was utterly surprised to return from a business trip just after Halloween to have my favourite Chai Tea Latte served to me in a Christmas cup. I then did a cursory look at the display and saw Christmas in all its splendour sitting on each and every shelf.

Retailers prepare earlier and earlier each year with their many and numerous displays. I realize that for some retailers the Christmas season is the time that can often make or break their bottom line. But for me, some of the excitement and thrill of the season is diminished by the commercialization. Not a real profound statement but one that requires reflection and considerable thought.

The holidays may often cause hardship and anguish for many people for a variety of reasons. There is the actual financial cost of providing Christmas to your children and family. Many people over extend themselves, financially, to provide the gifts their family want. Parents want to see their children's eyes light up as they unwrap that anticipated present from Santa. However, there are many parents who cannot provide these extras to their children as providing the basic needs of life are still overwhelming. It is often easy to forget during this festive season the parents who struggle, for whatever reason, to provide the basic needs to their children. We see these students each and everyday in our schools.

There are also many people who struggle with family relationships, and this season where the emphasis is on families and relationships, the holidays may cause them much internal and external turmoil. There are people who have experienced great loss in their lives in a variety of ways and they find all the frivolity and joy too much to handle when their own personal pain is dominating their lives. It may be difficult to enbrace the season when personal loss and pain are so fresh.

As you embark on this holiday season try to remember all those who, for a number of reasons, experience great challenges with this time of year. If you know someone who is experiencing such pain try to understand their needs as they go through this season when their pain may be more exposed and raw.

My own Christmas experience has changed in the last several years due to my own personal challenges. Last year was the first in many that I could truly embrace the Christmas season with a new sense of joy and peace. I have continued with some of my old traditions and have started new ones. One of my favourites was the making of gingerbread houses with my son. Last year we rekindled that tradition and made our gingerbread houses. However, I was more of the maker of icing than influencing any of the decorations. Now that Tyler is 25, not 13, he tends to want to decorate the house in his style, which to say was not traditional but enormously fun and we laughed much throughout the season as we all gazed at his creation. The thrill and enjoyment of this tradition still brings a smile to my face even now as I write this and reminisce about the making of last year's gingerbread house.

Many of my old traditions are gone but some do remain. New ones are evolving as my life journey continues. I have not, even after three years, had the ability to unpack my Christmas decorations from years gone by. They remain in those wonderful plastic totes, all labelled but stay dormant, with the memories, which will remain forever. There are some things in life that are too hard and you have to just let it go and that is okay.

I have a renewed enjoyment for the Holidays. I love the shiny colourful decorations, the baking, the making of gingerbread houses, all the lights that seem to make everything come to life, the feeling of joy, contentment, and happiness of having my family around me, the sense of peace and gratitude for all that I have.

No matter what challenges I have encountered or ones that I will encounter in the future, I have so many gifts to be thankful for and I hope I always will be able to appreciate those gifts and not take them for granted. To me, the real meaning of Christmas is gratitude.

As you prepare for the Christmas season, cherish your memories of years gone by and look ahead with eager anticipation of wonderful events yet to be discovered. I wish you the very best the season can offer – good cheer, happiness, health, peace, love, and contentment in your place in the world. No matter what traditions you hang on to or new ones that evolve, may your homes be filled with love and peace.

On behalf of all of us at the NLTA and your Provincial Executive Council, let me offer you the most sincere wishes for a merry holiday season and a fabulous New Year.

Lily B.

THE
bulletin

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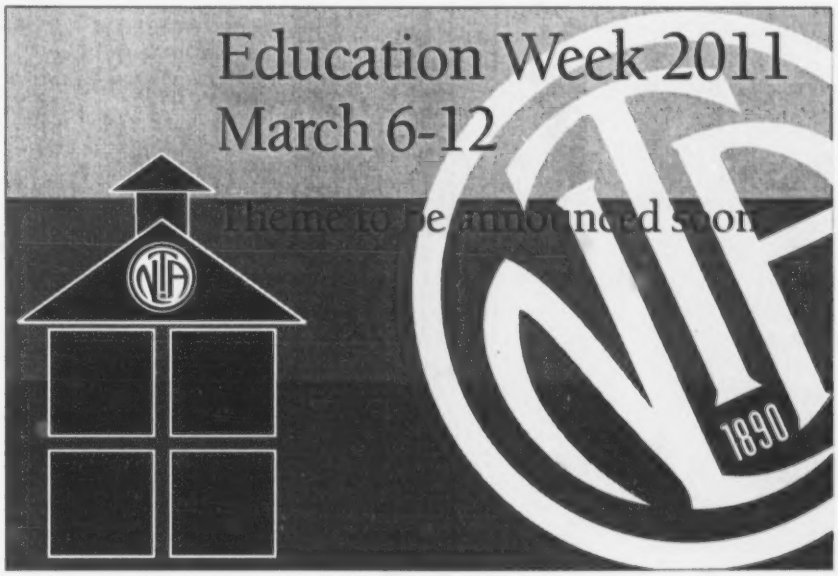


PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

UPPER GULLIES

Teacher presented Award of Distinction at MSVU

Upper Gullies Elementary school is very proud of one of their teachers, Valerie Fleming. Ms. Fleming teaches Grade One and has recently completed her Masters program through Mount Saint Vincent University. During the MSVU awards ceremony held in conjunction with convocation in late October, Ms. Fleming was presented with the Award of Distinction for her commitment and contribution as a student in the Masters program. This comes as no surprise, as Ms. Fleming is a huge advocate for critical literacy, technology and best teaching practices at the school, district and national levels of the education community. Her passion and dedication are second to none, and she is an inspiration to her students and colleagues.

Valerie Fleming at Mount Saint Vincent University's awards ceremony.

"Valerie Fleming is certainly deserving of this award of distinction. For the past few years, Valerie has been part of a teacher research learning community with the Eastern School District. As part of this professional development program, she investigated her teaching in relation to student learning in mathematics and critical literacy. Recently, her action research focused on using digital technologies to enhance students' literacy learning. Her research provides valuable insights into how grade one students can write and represent their ideas and communicate effectively using various technologies within an inclusive classroom. Valerie generously shares her findings with her peers throughout the district and her work has contributed greatly to my work as a program specialist. Congratulations Valerie!" ~ *Debbie Toope, Program Specialist, Eastern School District*

"I am very pleased to count Valerie Fleming as one of the teacher-collaborators in the MUN-ESDNL study of the digital technologies and literacy learning. Her recent contribution to our presentation at Edge 2010 Conference was exceptional. As was recognized in the awarding of this research grant, concrete examples of successful classroom implementation of digital technologies in literacy teaching and learning are much needed to supplement advocacy publications. Valerie provides such an example. I offer her my wholehearted congratulations on receiving a well-deserved recognition of her accomplishments." ~ *Roberta F. Hammett, Professor, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland*

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

2010 Name the Beluga Contest Results

What do Seanotes, Sea pod, Putup, Glaçon, Echo, Bubbles, Atsanik, Siku, Delphina and Leucas have in common? They are the winning names chosen in last year's Name the Beluga Contest for students in grades 4-6.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada offered students an opportunity to learn about beluga whales and aquatic species at risk in Canadian waters by participating in a fun contest to name 10 life-sized beluga whale replicas.

Approximately 1,250 entries were received from 76 schools across the province. Winning schools included Bishop Feild Elementary, St. Anne's School, C.C. Loughlin Elementary, Bay d'Espoir Academy, Amos Comenius Memorial School, and Woodland Elementary.

Names were submitted in a variety of languages including Inuktitut, Mikmaq, Finnish, Russian, German, Latin and French. A few of the winners were selected from these languages, including: Putup (Mikmaq), Glaçon (French), Atsanik (Inuktitut), Siku (Inuktitut), Delphina (Latin) and Leucas (Latin).

The winning students received a visit from a local fishery officer along with the newly-named life-sized beluga whale replica at the end of the school year. Students received a variety of beluga promotional items (like bracelets and tattoos), and some of them had their pictures featured in the local newspaper.

Feedback from teachers about the contest highlighted the fun, educational, interactive features on the contest website, like the live beluga webcam and the recorded beluga "conversations". Check them out at www.nfl.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/e0008583.

Here is a complete list of winners and their winning entries:

- "Seanotes" – Lauren, Gr. 4E, Bishop Feild Elementary, St. John's. "I picked this name because beluga whales mostly live in the sea and they make sounds like sea notes."
- "Sea pod" – Justin, Gr. 4E, Bishop Field Elementary, St. John's. "I picked this name because beluga whales go in pods of 10 and they live in the sea."
- "Putup" – Dawn, Gr. 6, St. Anne's School, Conne River. "I picked this name because this is how you say beluga in Mikmaq." (Pronounced Butup.)
- "Glaçon" – Victoria, Gr. 4, C.C. Loughlin Elementary, Corner Brook. "I picked this name because belugas are white and they try to stick their heads in ice holes so they can breathe."
- "Echo" – Marcus, Gr. 6, Bay d'Espoir Academy, Milltown. "Echo after their echolocation."
- "Bubbles" – Marcus, Gr. 6, Bay d'Espoir Academy, Milltown. "Bubbles because they look like bubbles in the water."
- "Atsanik" – Susan, Gr. 6, Amos Comenius Memorial School, Hopedale. "I picked this name because in Inuktitut it stands for Northern Lights."
- "Siku" – Jacqueline, Gr. 6, J.C. Erdhart Memorial School, Makkovik. "Siku is an Inuit word meaning ice. I picked this name because it reminds me of cold fresh water which the beluga swims freely in Labrador."
- "Delphina" – Joshua, Gr. 4, Woodland Elementary School, Dildo. "I think it is a good name and it's a part of the scientific name."
- "Leucas" – Iesha, Gr. 4, Woodland Elementary School, Dildo. "Their scientific name is Delphinapterus Leucas and it's also a nice name."

Fishery Officer for a Day Contest Winners

High school students Jeffrey Nordmore from Mountain Feild Academy, Forteau, and Darcy Kavanagh from Baltimore School, Ferryland, each participated in an aerial surveillance flight and a boat patrol with a local DFO fishery officer last June.

As grand prize winners in the 2010 Fishery Officer for a Day Contest, Jeffrey and Darcy were able to spend a day away from school working with a local fishery officer and getting a first-hand look at a possible career choice.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada sponsors this contest annually to encourage high school students to think about how our actions impact marine and ocean life and habitat. Each year students are asked to think about a particular issue dealing with the conservation and protection of our oceans and write or illustrate their thoughts. Students choose from three categories: print (essay), art (poster) or multimedia.

In 2010 students were asked to consider aquatic species at risk and their habitat.

Congratulations to the winners of the 2010 contest:

- Grand Prize (Newfoundland): Darcy Kavanagh, Baltimore School, Ferryland
- Grand Prize (Labrador): Jeffrey Nordmore, Mountain Feild Academy, Forteau
- First Place Print: Allyson Roach, Fatima Academy, St. Bride's
- First Place Multimedia: Cody Ryan, St. Mary's All-Grade, Mary's Harbour
- First Place Art: Cassandra Pye, St. Mary's All-Grade, Mary's Harbour

Fisheries and Oceans Canada is currently working on the 2011 Fishery Officer for a Day Contest. Stay tuned for details, coming soon.

OTTAWA

CTF presents first subsidy cheque for Imagineaction program

As part of its new Imagineaction program, the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) presented the very first subsidy cheque on November 10, 2010 for $7,500 to the Collège catholique Samuel-Genest in Ottawa for ten citizenship and social action projects.

The school projects include an environment week, arts exposition in a community center, a school mural depicting the school values, an outdoor excursion with families living in poverty, a recycling program and a multicultural week among others.

Imagineaction is a CTF program that provides subsidies to schools across Canada for projects that will engage students in citizenship and social action activities.

Teachers can find out more, register and apply for subsidies by visiting www.imagine-action.ca. Resources and ideas for activities are also provided.

(l-r): Réal Charette, François Dumont, heads of the Collège catholique Samuel-Genest; Mary-Lou Donnelly, CTF President and Benoit Mercier, President of l'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens.

CANADA

Physical Education Teaching Excellence Award Call for Nominations

PHE Canada's Physical Education Teaching Excellence (PETE) Award honours exceptional teachers (one from each province) for their excellence in teaching physical education and their ability to motivate children and youth to participate in physical activity. This award is the only national award in Canada that recognizes physical education teachers for their hard work and dedication in helping to build strong, healthy and physically active children. Go to www.phecanada.ca/awards/pete-award for more information to nominate someone you know today! Nominations are due January 2011.

KEVIN THOMAS KENNEDY, 1949 – 2010

Kevin Kennedy grew up on Bell Island and was the oldest of 13 children, two of whom are predeceased along with his parents.

Kevin graduated from Memorial University on October 21, 1972 with a Bachelor of Education and a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Mathematics. Kevin started his teaching career on Bell Island at St. Edward's and St. Kevin's School. From there he went to Xavier Central High in Long Harbour where for two years he was Math Department Head along with teaching all Math courses from Grades 7 to 12, as well as with advanced Math. After the closing of Xavier Central High he crossed the road to Holy Trinity Central High in Norman's Cove, where he stayed until his retirement on June 25, 1999.

During his many years of teaching he was on the Provincial Marking Board (Math – Grade 12) for nine years. He also did student foreign tours to Europe and Africa, was Director of the Student Council and Director of School Yearbooks, and was a National Math Facilitator. Along with his busy teaching career he found time to spend many years doing the Curling Circuit around Newfoundland.

After retiring he spent two years doing private tutoring helping many students accomplish their Math, which was his love.

To teach is to educate, encourage and inspire.

FRED HOLDEN

On July 18, 2010, Fred J. Holden passed away at the cabin he built on the land he loved. Fred retired from teaching in 1995 and many teacher co-workers of his will recall how much he enjoyed his weekends with his wife Shirley, at their summer home.

Fred began building the cabin at the same time he graduated from Memorial University with a B.Ed. His first position was in 1977 as a replacement teacher at St. Kevin's, Goulds. However, this was not his first time teaching. Fred spent several years in the 1970s as a Red Cross swimming instructor at Littledale swimming pool in St. John's. His first full-time classroom position was at Mary Queen of the World, Mount Pearl, teaching English and Social Studies. Here, he got involved with the student production of the Broadway hit, "Annie". Fred played the part of Daddy Warbucks and was proud to share the stage with the fantastic voices of many talented young people. Fred then taught English and Social Studies at Holy Heart of Mary High School where he engaged students with his vast knowledge of the province in the teaching of Newfoundland Culture. Fred retired from O'Donel High School in Mount Pearl where he continued to share his talents and interests with the students. Fred took great pride in being a teacher. He saw potential in all students and worked so that all students saw that potential within themselves. A student wrote it best, "Mr. Holden was a kind gentleman and a good teacher."

And at the cabin, Fred's stories of boyhood St. John's along with his love and laughter was shared around the fireplace with his wife, son and daughter-in-law, his three grandchildren, his son, and me... his daughter.

(Submitted by Linda Holden O'Rielly, teacher at St. Kevin's High, Goulds)

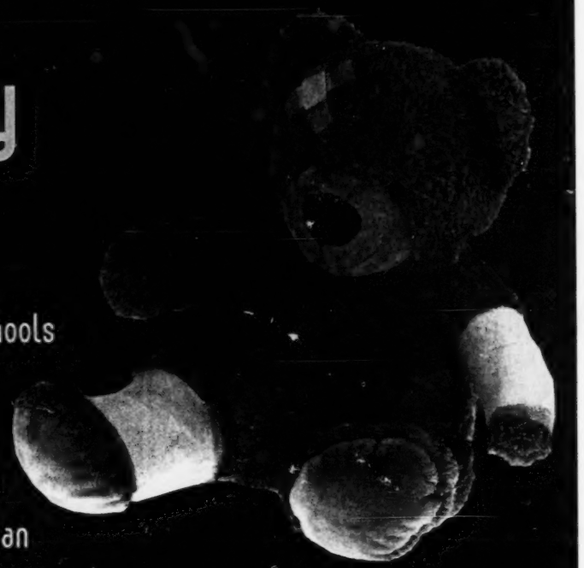
In Memoriam Submission Guidelines

Submissions to In Memoriam should be a **maximum of 250 to 300 words** and may contain a photo of the deceased. In Memoriams should be submitted within a timely manner – normally within the same school year (if possible) of the death of the teacher. Information may be included on where the deceased lived and taught, their education, accomplishments, community involvement and family information.

It is preferred that all submissions be e-mailed to Lesley-Ann Browne, Editor of *The Bulletin*, at labrowne@nlta.nl.ca. If submitting by mail, please address to: Editor, *The Bulletin*, Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, 3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL, A1B 1W1. Submissions may also be faxed to 726-4302 or toll-free at 1-877-711-6582. Please be sure to include a contact name, school or business name, mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address.

February 14, 2011

Janeway Day 2011



Every year, Janeway Day in the schools provides an opportunity for students and teachers to help other children. Since 1986 students and teachers have donated more than $900,000 to the Janeway.

Here's how to participate in Janeway Day 2011:
Ask students and teachers to forego the equivalent of recess monies for one day. That's their donation to the Janeway.

All monies will be forwarded to the Janeway to help the children of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Caring and Sharing for the Janeway
A project of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

Happy Holidays

by EDWARD HANCOCK

"A time to reflect, relax and regenerate." This is how one teacher once described to me her view of the Christmas season. That description is probably an apt one for many teachers but, while it may well describe what we would like the season to be, it likely falls well short of describing how we really spend the time.

It is easy (and natural) to get caught up in the frenzy of the Christmas preparations, and then the eagerness to squeeze as much as possible into the holiday break before school begins again. It does take effort to force ourselves to disengage from the hurried pace to which we are all accustomed. Yet, we must all seize the opportunity which the Christmas season provides to take some time from the break to relax and regenerate the body, mind and spirit while focusing on family, friends and loved ones. It is somewhat ironic to think that relaxing and regenerating will require a conscious effort, but that's how it is for a teacher.

And what about the reflection piece? If we reflect on the meaning of the Christmas season, it speaks of giving, caring for others and being grateful for what we have. So Christmas is a time to reflect on the benefit we have through living in a democratic society, in a country that is relatively well-to-do, through being part of a profession whose work is supported by parents and the public, and through having family and friends with whom we can share life's significant moments. The profession of teaching is dedicated to the growth and betterment of those in our care and the spirit of Christmas is a real reflection of that dedication.

To all of you, may the coming holiday season bring hope, joy, love and opportunities for rejuvenation and reconnection. On behalf of all the staff who work for you at the NLTA office, I extend best wishes for the season.

Ed

Christmas is doing a little something extra for someone else. ~ Charles Schulz

{ publication électronique }

{ e-publication }

PERSPECTIVES

Canadian Teachers' Federation
Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants

www.ctf-fce.ca

School Closure and Salary

When are Substitute Teachers Entitled to be Paid?

by PERRY DOWNEY

Clause 49.04 of the Provincial Collective Agreement (Clause 46.04 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement) states: *For salary purposes, substitute teachers shall be deemed to have kept school on any day or part thereof where: (a) the school is closed pursuant to Section 32 of the Schools Act, 1997; or (b) previously contracted substitute services are not required for any other reason(s) and the substitute teacher is not notified prior to reporting for duty at the school that his or her services are not required.*

Q. If a substitute teacher is contracted to work at a school on a particular day or for a particular contract period and that school is subsequently closed due to inclement weather, lack of heating, or other similar causes, is the substitute teacher entitled to be paid for the day or days? (Refer to Clause 49.04(a) – Provincial Collective Agreement: Clause 46.04(a) – Labrador West Collective Agreement.

A. Yes. Section 32 of the Schools Act, 1997 states that "a teacher in a school shall, for the purpose of determining payment of salary, be considered to have taught on a day or part of it when school" is:
(a) closed "because of inclement weather...";
(b) closed "by order of the minister responsible for health...";
(c) closed "by the board...";
(d) "declared uninhabitable by the board because of fire, storm, failure of the sewage system or other cause of a similar nature";
(e) closed "because the teacher was unavoidably prevented from opening the school because of delay in construction... remodeling or renovations... and the minister is satisfied that no alternative accommodation was available";
(f) closed "because of a lack of heating or for other reason, where, in the opinion of the minister, the closing of the school could not have been avoided by the teacher"; or
(g) "the teacher is required to act as a member of a board of arbitration established in accordance with the collective agreement as defined in the Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act...".

Q. Is a substitute teacher still entitled to receive pay if school is closed pursuant to Section 32 of the Schools Act and the teacher is notified prior to arriving at the school?

A. Yes. Substitute teachers, once contracted to work, are entitled to receive pay for any day or part thereof, if school is closed pursuant to Section 32 of the Act, regardless if they are contacted prior to arriving at the school.

For example, if a substitute teacher is contracted a week in advance to substitute for a teacher who is going to be absent and on the particular day in question the school is closed due to inclement weather or notified in advance that there is going to be a scheduled power outage forcing the school to close (or the school is closed for any other reason as outlined in Section 32), the substitute teacher will still be entitled to be paid for the day, regardless if the substitute is contacted by the school and informed that the school will be closed. The substitute teacher, like any other regular teacher on that staff, is deemed to have kept school on that day or part thereof for the purpose of determining salary.

Q. Would a substitute teacher be entitled to receive pay if previously contracted service is cancelled for any other reason other than those listed

in Section 32 of the Act and the substitute teacher is notified prior to reporting for duty at the school? (Refer to Clause 49.04(b) – Provincial Collective Agreement and Clause 46:04 (b) – Labrador West Collective Agreement.)

A. No. If school remains open and the services of the substitute teacher are no longer required and the substitute teacher is notified prior to reporting for duty at the school, the substitute teacher is deemed not to have kept school on that day and thus would not be entitled to be paid. Scenario: A substitute teacher is contracted to work for a teacher who is scheduled to attend a professional development workshop. The day prior to the workshop, the workshop is cancelled and the regular teacher is scheduled to return to work. As long as the substitute teacher is contacted "prior to reporting for duty at the school" he/she would not be entitled to pay. However, if the substitute is not notified prior to reporting for duty, then they are entitled to receive pay for the day in question.

Additional information on these issues can be found in the NLTA Infosheet #13 "Substitute Teacher Membership and Benefits" at www.nlta.nl.ca. Go to "Publications", then "I" for Infosheets.

Perry Downey is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

NLTA AWARDS 2010-11

Is There a Potential Winner in your School?

Each year your Association honours several of its members with four prestigious awards. Please take a moment to read about them. If you feel that someone within your school qualifies for nomination for one of these awards for the 2010-11 school year, please contact your school representative who will forward the name and information on this person to your branch president or the appropriate special interest council president.

Special Recognition Award

This award was instituted by Johnson Incorporated to recognize the 100th Anniversary of the NLTA. It is presented annually to an active or life member of the Association who, while a teacher in the province, has made a major contribution to the **cultural, social and/or community life** of Newfoundland and Labrador. The award recognizes contributions in the areas of the arts (music/literature/visual arts), community service, and/or municipal politics. Nominations must come from branches or special interest councils and must be **received at the NLTA Office by January 15th**.

Allan Bishop Award

This Award was also established during the NLTA Centennial Year to recognize outstanding service to the NLTA at the **provincial** level and it is named after former NLTA President and long-time staff member, Allan Bishop. The award is open to any active or life member of the Association, except that current members of the Provincial Executive are ineligible for the award and a provincial past president is ineligible for the award within three years of his/her presidency. Nominations must come from branches or special interest councils and must be **received at the NLTA Office by January 15th.**

Bancroft Award

This award, named in honour of James Frederick Bancroft, the first president of the NLTA, was established in 1980 during the 90th anniversary of the Association. The award was established to recognize the outstanding service given to **branches** by the dedicated and talented teachers whose efforts have helped make the NLTA the strong association it is today. Nominations must come from branches and must be **received at the NLTA Office by January 15th**.

Barnes Award

This award was established in 1987 and is named for Dr. Arthur Barnes, a long-time supporter of the Association, who, in 1920, became the first Minister of Education. The award was established to recognize outstanding professional development services provided by teachers at the special interest council level. Nominations must come from special interest councils or branches and must be **received at the NLTA Office by January 15th**.

All nominations for the above Association awards must be typed on the proper nomination form which can be obtained from your local branch president or the NLTA Office and must be submitted by the deadline indicated in order to be considered.

Personal Property at School

by STEFANIE TUFF

What happens if a teacher's personal property is lost or damaged at school? From time to time, this question arises, and it is important for teachers to understand the employer's and their own responsibilities in this regard.

This issue is dealt with in Article 34 of the Provincial Collective Agreement (Article 35 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement). Two types of personal property are identified – "personal effects which the teacher would reasonably have in his/her possession during the normal performance of his/her duty" and "tools, equipment, or other materials" which the teacher has received written permission from the School Board to use in the performance of teaching duties.

Personal effects include items such as clothing, footwear, eyeglasses, purses and briefcases, etc. – the usual things that teachers would be wearing or have with them at school on a regular basis. If, in the performance of his/her duty, a teacher suffers loss of or damage to any such personal effects, he/she may be entitled to monetary compensation, up to a maximum amount of $325. The amount of compensation will depend upon proof of the value of the item(s) damaged or lost.

The second category of personal property covers items used by teachers in performing their duties. A teacher's own personal resources (books, displays, etc.), equipment, computer, camera, musical instrument, etc. are not personal effects. In order to be protected by the employer from loss of or damage to such items, teachers need to have written authorization from their school board to use them in the course of their teaching duties before bringing the items into the school. Some personal home insurance policies may provide coverage for such items at school; however, this would depend on the particulars of each individual situation and teachers are advised to consult with their insurer and request written confirmation of coverage before taking personal belongings into the workplace.

Any incident of loss or damage to personal effects or other items must be reported in writing to the Director of the School Board (or his/her designate) within five working days of the discovery of the loss or damage. If this deadline is not met, a claim that would otherwise qualify for compensation could be denied. In addition, the School Board is not obliged to compensate a teacher for any loss of or damage to personal property that is caused by the teacher's own negligence.

If you have any questions regarding the above, please contact an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Stefanie Tuff is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

Enjoying Christmas Despite the Stresses

by ROSS FLOOD

The holiday season is a time for music, lights, gift-giving and being with family and friends. It is a time of excitement, joy and spirituality. However, for some people it can also bring many pressures: hectic schedules; financial strains; family tensions; loneliness; and unmet wishes. Each year, Christmas may take a bigger effort to find the balance between spending, gift giving, parties, family time and time for self. As we move into the holidays, some people tend to overexert themselves and the merriment can quickly become bah humbug! While preparing for the upcoming Christmas holiday, however, you may be teaching and also fretting about cleaning the house and preparing meals for visiting relatives and friends. No wonder the Christmas season has also been called the season of stress! Changing your expectations and not keeping the same activities solely for sentimental reasons can help make this a happy holiday season.

- It is important to be responsible for your own happiness during Christmas. Engage with family and friends, but let others take responsibility for their lives and emotions.
- You should decide ahead of time that holiday activities you take on is a choice you have made. You can also change your mind if things get too hectic and you or family members get overwhelmed.
- Remember that you can enjoy Christmas without giving the biggest party, or having the prettiest tree, or the best decorated house. Make it fun, not a competition.
- If you find the holidays lonely, a volunteer activity can be therapeutic. Doing is preventative medicine against depression.
- Take it one day at a time. Plan activities and don't take on the entire holiday season at once. Have quiet time for your children and always make time for yourself.
- Make a list of all the different things that you like about the holidays and, of course, the things you dislike. Do the things you enjoy and rid yourself of most of those you dislike. In other words, if it brings you grief, why are you still doing it?
- Try to provide time for family members to share the real meaning of the holidays. Do things with your children or friends you both like or let them suggest activities during Christmas.

Remember that the real meaning of Christmas is happiness, peace, joy, faith, and love. This is a joyous time of the year and these are the reasons for celebrating Christmas. You are responsible for your own feelings and actions over Christmas.

Making the Holiday Time Stress Free for Children

As the holidays approach, parents are not the only ones who feel the demands of the holidays. Along with the excitement of Santa's visit, children may also feel a rising anxiety as visitors, holiday events and marathon shopping outings disrupt their normal routines. Children are sensitive to their parents' feelings and can get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season. Little ones are especially in danger of over-stimulation. Too much "fun" can upset children who may become grouchy and restless. Listed below are some tips that parents may use to help children enjoy the holidays:

Try keeping to a regular schedule for meals, naps and bedtime. Limit things like snacks and sugar by having fewer candies and goodies out when you don't have visitors.

Involve children in holiday preparations. Even the youngest child can put bows on gifts or cut out a sugar cookie. It makes them feel important and teaches them about family traditions.

Children can become distressed during new activities, so talk to them beforehand about visits to Santa, outings or parties.

When it becomes obvious that your child has had enough excitement, remember to have quiet activities ready like soft music, storybooks, puzzles and quiet games to play. There are computer web sites that have games, puzzles, activities, and arts for children of all ages. If you can't find a quiet spot, bundle up and go for a walk.

Are you away from home for the holidays? Cards,

phone calls, e-mail messages and Skype video can help to keep you close. Record or videotape a Christmas story for your child's bedtime story.

For children, keep it simple. Don't forget to reinforce good behaviour with lots of hugs, kisses and praise. The greatest gift you can give your child during the holiday season is your time, attention and love.

Survive Christmas Holiday Stress With a Positive Attitude

Your attitude and belief systems about the holidays greatly influence how you set your expectations. Teachers, with the time off from school, tend to have more time than most adults to engage with family, attend social activities and enjoy outdoor fun, but still may be overwhelmed with the level of activity. We offer the following suggestions to support you in having a joyful holiday.

Practice Acceptance. Instead of hesitating about participating in holiday rituals or dreading the visit of a favourite relative, accept the situation or person as they are and notice how your mood improves. Acceptance is simply acknowledging what is instead of resisting reality. Being non-judgmental can lead to a feeling of peace and calm.

Be Delighted. Looking for enchantment, joy and wonderment in everyday activities reduces stress and uplifts even the lowest moods. Enjoy a bright star filled sky, the first snow fall, or a crackling fire on a cold night. Be in the present where everything can be peaceful and joyful.

Find Forgiveness. Getting together with family and relatives during the holidays can trigger painful memories of old family wounds for many. Open your heart by finding forgiveness with past family quarrels. Forgiveness isn't about excusing behaviour; it's about accepting and freeing yourself to move from the past into the present. Planning your family's travelling and housing arrangements can ease a lot of stress with holiday visiting.

Ignite Creativity. Creativity, a childlike appreciation for things and spontaneity are wonderful antidotes to stress and feeling overwhelmed. Get your creative juices flowing through decorating, singing carols, building a snow person, or playing games with your children. Acting as a kid again can bring real joy and connect with your children and grandchildren.

Be compassionate. This time of year can be difficult for those without family and friends, the homeless, or those dealing with loss or financial hardship. Through compassion we can gain a broader perspective on life and realize we are better off than we thought. Giving to food banks, Christmas Gift Drives, helping out those with less than you can help give a deeper meaning to Christmas.

Shift Perspectives. If driving is usually a frustrating experience, use the increased holiday traffic as a time to listen to your favourite radio station, CD or audio book. Whenever you find yourself reacting in anger, or frustration, challenge your perspective on the situation and look for new opportunities. Look for those aspects of your life that you can control or at least influence, it will reduce stress during this festive time of year.

Be Grateful. During the holiday season be grateful for what you have and share with family – the easiest way to reduce stress is with gratitude. Show appreciation for the people you love, the tangible things you have in your life, and the small and large blessings you receive. Take some time over Christmas to heal past grudges between you and some close people around you.

You can learn to thrive instead of just survive the holiday season by implementing these positive attitudes into your life. You have the power to create your own experience to enjoy!

Ross Flood is a coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for Teachers. For confidential assistance contact Ross Flood (ext. 242) or Judy Beranger (ext. 265).

FUN CHRISTMAS WEB SITES - FOR BIG AND LITTLE CHILDREN

Some of these sites are commercial ones, but all have free games, puzzles, activities, and cards that children can enjoy over the holidays

- http://robinsfyi.com/holidays/christmas/christmasfun.htm *(Free Christmas songs, arts and crafts, activities, on-line games)*
- www.xmasfun.com/ *(Free site with Christmas music, games, downloads, clip art and graphics, quizzes, party games, etc.)*
- www.theholidayspot.com/christmas/fun/ *(Free site with games, music, downloads, Christmas jokes)*
- www.noelnoelnoel.com/ *(Songs, family fun, traditions, recipes)*
- www.northpole.com/ *(Commercial site with free games, puzzles and activities)*
- http://holidays.kaboose.com/christmas/index.html *(Free site with colouring sheets, puzzles, Christmas cards)*
- www.akidsheart.com/ *(Free site for teachers and kids. Click on holidays, then Christmas for free games, colouring, puzzles, activities etc.)*
- www.rexanne.com/xmas-kids.html *(Commercial site, with free games, puzzles, art)*
- www.primarygames.com/holidays/christmas/games.htm *(Commercial site with free games, colouring pages, puzzles and on-line games.)*
- www.stresstips.com/xmastest.htm *(A humourous online Christmas stress test for adults)*

He's Not There

A Tribute to Earl Rutledge

(Inspired by the film about the legendary Bob Dylan)

by BEVERLEY PARK

In my life I have been privileged to know some incredible people. Among my family, my colleagues, my friends, and all the intersections of these groups, along with some people with whom I have had the briefest of encounters, there are a few who stand out. One of these individuals is Earl Rutledge. I met Earl when he joined the Nova Scotia Teachers Union as a staff officer for Professional Development. I knew him all too briefly. Recently, he passed away, and I lost not only a colleague and a friend, but a guide and inspiration. He loved his family; he loved life; he loved his work; and he loved Bob Dylan – not necessarily in that order! When he retired a few years ago, I wrote a tribute that I have adapted for this article. I chose to use the trailer of a then recent release of a film about Bob Dylan, *I'm Not There*, to talk about Earl.

"Like Dylan, he was multi-talented; so complex, so simple ... everyone... no one ... just Earl."

It takes six people to depict the life of Bob Dylan in "I'm Not There". In the trailer, words flash onscreen to say the film was inspired by "true, false, authentic, exaggerated, real and imagined stories." Well, in our lives we all have those stories: the true, the false, the authentic, the exaggerated, the real and the imagined. Only we know which are which.

It took six people to depict him because of the many ways Dylan re-invented himself throughout his life – not because he was fickle, but because there was and is too much in him to be embodied in one man in one lifetime. So, he became several.

People are all about freedom – freedom to live a certain way - 'course the more you live that way, the less it feels like freedom. Me, I change during the course of a day. I wake, I'm one person, and when I go to sleep, I know for certain I'm somebody else.

Dylan was and is all about freedom. So too, was Earl.

Though I only had the privilege of knowing Earl for a decade or so, I suspect that he re-invented himself a few times. I know he was changed by that drunk at the pub in Cape Breton who swerved and swooned in figure 8s across the table, drooling into the beers of the teachers gathered for a TGIF happy hour, as he slobberingly told them of how his life was altered, and not in a good way, by a few ill-chosen words of a teacher – some 50+ years ago?

He became someone else when he started to work the night shift – the only teacher I know whose regular job started when all other teachers were getting ready to go home for the day. He ran a resource centre for teachers in his district and loved that it put him in touch with the many dedicated individuals who, after putting their own kids to bed, would show up at 9:00 or 10:00 at night to plan lessons and create materials for their "other" kids. Working after hours is maybe where he learned his respect for the people who clean the toilets and mop the floors. I am sure that experience and those people changed who he was.

Earl also likely changed when he married Chris ... and could never speak of her without smiling. And I know he was a different man when his daughter came into his life. He created her – and she recreated him.

Earl defied labels and being categorized, yet I suspect his life could be segmented into something like *LBB* and *LAB* – Life *Before* Bob and Life *After* Bob – although LWB – Life *With* Bob would be most accurate. I cannot even imagine thinking of Earl without simultaneously thinking of Dylan!

Who was Earl?

Going back to the trailer for the Dylan movie it says: "He is everyone. He is no one." This is followed by a

quote from Dylan himself: "All I can do is be me."

Honestly, if there were to be a film about Earl's life, we could use the same trailer. Like Dylan he was multi-talented; so complex, so simple … everyone … no one … just Earl.

While I was thinking of seeing Earl that evening as we were to say farewell and happy retirement, I had a few project ideas and I needed a picture. I looked for a photograph among a few I thought I had taken over the years and realized that, with my poor electronic filing, I could not find one. I immediately thought of the Dylan line "They asked me for a picture and I just laughed ... dignity never been photographed!"

If there were to be a film about Earl, like the Dylan film, with a cast of characters depicting the one man, who would play him? Well, I'm no Cate Blanchett, but I'd like a role. I'd like to play that philosopher king who came on staff at the NSTU, showed up one day at a CAPTO PD Officers meeting and changed the way we all did our work. The one who changed the way we thought about teachers and unions and life and living. (And here I have to evoke the ghosts of a few PD officers past: René, Nancy, André, Alex, Mary Jane; and those of us who continue to do this work: Ardith, Melinda, Kim, Gilles, George, B.J., Gerard, Ron, Danny, and the only two of the old crowd left – Bob and me.) We haven't been the same since – and we likely never will be. For that we thank him, and we curse him. Earl made it more difficult for us. It's harder to act less and think more; it's tougher to be less analytical and more caring – to figure out the hard way what's the right thing to do instead of looking it up in policies, or heaven forbid, going to Google.

No, Earl, we'll never be the same for knowing you ... ah, but we were so much older then, we're younger than that now.

With greatest respect for the man who lives on in all of those who knew him.

Beverley Park is Senior Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.

Is the World Really Open?

by JIM MURPHY

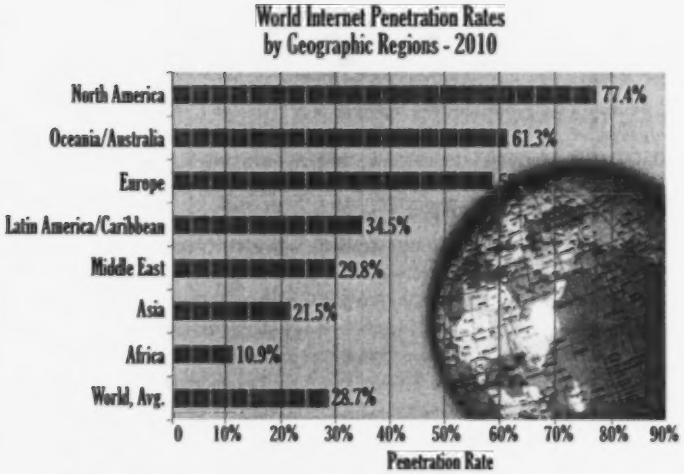
A recent conference I attended included a keynote by Dr. Curtis Bonk from Indiana University. He talked about how technologies and networks and the Web have made the world flatter and more open and that there are more freely available educational resources now than ever. Over the course of his talk, he alluded to "open learning" and how it is rapidly and increasingly becoming more available through a myriad of global networks. More and more research, books and instructional opportunities are now free to access, but only IF you have connectivity and a computer and are literate. While this may be great news for countries that have the infrastructure and technologies, unfortunately it means very little to those parts of the world that have none. In our province, we take connectivity and access to technologies for granted. But, are we providing equitable access to students in this province, regardless of geographical location?

The two tables below (www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm) offer a perspective on where we are globally with Internet usage.

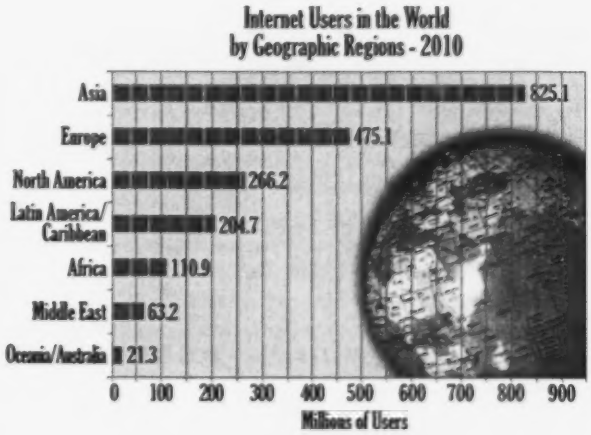
A quick analysis indicates where we sit from two perspectives, penetration rates and users. We sit high in the penetration rates, and yet compared to Asia and Europe, who have higher populations, the number of users is significantly lower. But, what is really of interest are the penetration rates of areas such as the Middle East and in particular Africa, where usage and penetration is lowest. Although it may be interesting to indicate that there is lots of "free stuff" out there, including free universities, courses, novels, texts, research, video, and access to experts galore, it is still only available to a very select clientele. So, the context in which this question is posed must be given due consideration. Is the world really open? Well, if one considers equity of access to learning, then a great deal of groundwork needs to be accomplished before the world can truly be considered open.

The following are some interesting points from an article entitled "Internet Usage in Third World Countries", that indicates:

• North America is only 5% of the world although 68% is online



Source: Internet World Stats - www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm
Penetration Rates are based on a world population of 6,845,609,960 and 1,966,514,816 estimated Internet users on June 30, 2010. Copyright© 2010, Miniwatts Marketing Group



Source: Internet World Stats - www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm
Estimated Internet users are 1,966,514,816 on June 30, 2010
Copyright© 2010, Miniwatts Marketing Group

• Asia is 56% of the World and 10% is online (but the largest amount of internet users anywhere)
• Latin America is 8% of the world, but has 14% online
• Europe is 12% of the world with 36% online
(www.web-strategist.com/blog/2006/08/21/internet-usage-in-third-world-countries/)

In the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, many rural communities do not offer broadband Internet services. We have all heard the stories where people live across the street from a fibre optic run, and yet still have dial-up in their homes. Many of our schools, in particular CDLI schools, offer frame relay, a slow, copper-based solution that is a stop gap measure at best. We have come a long way, but we still have a long way to go. It is quite difficult to find statistics on connectivity for the province, but my experiences with distance learning in rural Newfoundland and Labrador leads me to conclude that the school is often the only building in the community connected with any form of broadband. It is evolving, but very slowly.

Certainly, one need not look beyond one's community or province to see first-hand the differences in the levels of access to technologies. It is unfortunate that there is a demographic divide that impacts access to technologies in our communities, our province and our country. And when we go beyond North America and look globally, the difference becomes even more apparent.

Again, is the world really open? Are we providing the access that we could be providing? Is it equitable?

Yes, there are ongoing global initiatives that are addressing some of the inequities. Many countries are attempting to lower the cost of access to technology. India, for example, has developed a laptop computer that comes in under $35. (www.physorg.com/news199083092.html) The one laptop for child program (www.olpcnews.com/) is similar and hundreds of thousands of laptops are being deployed to school-aged children in underdeveloped countries for learning. Closer to home, New Brunswick is introducing a 21st Century learning plan called NB3-21C that will see the introduction of one-to-one mobile computing. Mobile and handheld technologies are replacing traditional desktops.

There is no panacea. However, we need to find feasible solutions, locally, provincially, nationally and globally. If we expect to create equitable access to the types of learning available through this vast maze of online resources; this "open world philosophy", then we have to provide the technologies and the infrastructure to access them.

Jim Murphy is Coordinator of the Virtual Teacher Centre.

Resources

- http://worldisopen.com/
- www.physorg.com/news199083092.html
- http://allafrica.com/stories/200909080071.html
- www.trainingshare.com/pdfs/Newfoundlandkeynote.pdf
- http://blogs.itbusiness.ca/2010/02/one-laptop-per-student-a-pre-requisite-to-a-21st-century-public-education/
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDM3D4MNQBs
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljbI-363A2Q
- http://davidwarlick.com/2cents/?tag=nb3-21c

CTF Biennial National Poll

Canadians Strongly Believe Public Education Must be Better Funded

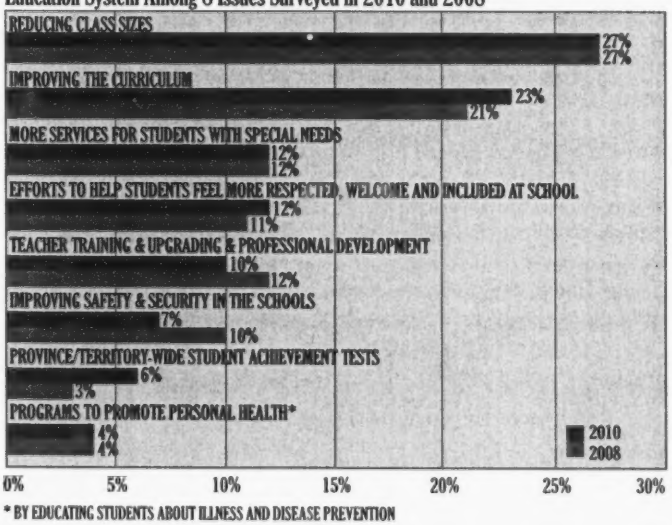
by RICHARD RIEL

Since 1995, the biennial CTF National Issues in Education Poll has been examining Canadians' priorities for education spending as well as assessing how the public grades schools, attitudes towards measuring student achievement, issues such as challenges faced by schools and programs and activities that foster citizenship.

This year, the CTF public opinion poll was conducted between February 18 and March 5, 2010, with 2,591 adults throughout Canada by Vector Research and the results were released at the CTF President's Forum: The Funding of Public Education: Great Promise in Edmonton last July. CTF has conducted national polling for almost a decade, and results throughout the years have been similar: Canadians strongly believe that public education must be better funded.

Chart A

Reducing Class Sizes Remains Canadians' Highest Spending Priority for the Public Education System Among 8 Issues Surveyed in 2010 and 2008



* BY EDUCATING STUDENTS ABOUT ILLNESS AND DISEASE PREVENTION

Highlights

Highest Priority Spending Areas in Public Education

Question: If more money was spent on the public education system, which one of these would you improve first or give the highest priority? [See Chart A]

• Just over one-quarter of Canadians surveyed in the 2010 CTF National Issues in Education Poll (27%) believe that, if more money was spent on the public education system, "Reducing class sizes" should be the highest priority among 8 surveyed issues, matching the share reported in 2008. The 2010 National Issues in Education Poll was conducted on line for the Canadian Teachers' Federation by Vector Research + Development Inc. from February 18 to March 5, 2010 with 2,591 Canadian adults 18 years of age and over.

• 23% of Canadians surveyed in 2010 gave "Improving the curriculum" the highest priority, ranking second, and up marginally from 21% in 2008.

• 6% of Canadians surveyed in 2010 believe "Province/territory-wide student achievement tests" should be the highest priority if more money is spent on the public education system, ranking seventh, and up slightly from 3% in 2008.

• "Programs to promote personal health by educating students about illness and disease prevention" received the lowest ranking with only 4% of Canadians reporting it should be the top spending priority, matching results from 2008.

Support for Increased Public Education Funding

Question: How do you feel about the level of government funding of the public education system in your province/territory? Would you favour or oppose increased funding for each of the following? 1. Public elementary schools 2. Public secondary or high schools [See Chart B]

• 87% of Canadians surveyed in the 2010 CTF National Issues in Education Poll would support increased government funding in their province or

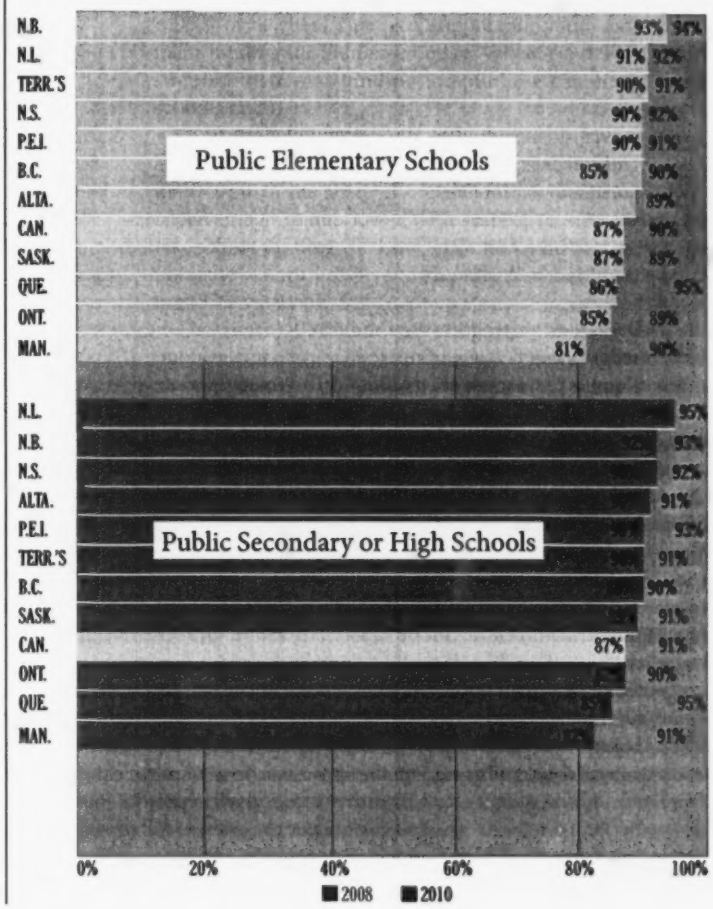
territory for public elementary schools, and the same share would support increased funding for public secondary or high schools. This represents a slight decline from shares of 90% and 91% respectively in 2008.

- 95% of teachers surveyed support more government funding for public secondary schools and 94% support increased funding for public elementary schools in 2010.
- An overwhelming majority of both school parents and non-school parents support increased funding in 2010, with the share of non school parents being 5 percentage points lower with respect to elementary school funding (86% vs. 91%) and 4 percentage points lower with respect to secondary school funding (87% vs. 91%).
- The share of respondents supporting increased public elementary school funding was slightly higher among parents with children in elementary schools (92%) than parents with children in secondary schools (88%) and non-school parents (86%).
- The share of respondents supporting increased public secondary school funding was virtually the same among parents with children in secondary schools (90%) and parents with children in elementary schools (91%), and slightly higher than among non-school parents (87%).
- Support for increased public education funding was slightly higher among women than men, with 90% of women surveyed supporting increased funding for both public elementary schools as well as public secondary schools respectively, compared to 85% of male respondents regarding both levels, respectively.

Richard Riel is a researcher at the Canadian Teachers' Federation.

Chart B

Almost 9 in 10 Canadians Surveyed Support Increased Public Education Funding for Both the Elementary and Secondary Levels, 2008 and 2010 Survey Results



Psychological Scaffolding – All About Fitting In

by WAYNE NESBIT & JANICE MASON

The following is the synopsis of a larger research paper. The complete research paper with references and cited works can be accessed at www.nlta.nl.ca.

Learning is not a solitary activity and development does not consist of a lone person building a model of the external world. Somebody provides a scaffold for the child to climb on – offers provisional hypotheses that the child can use in a tentative way until he can climb on his own. ~ Jerome Bruner

Literature concerning inclusion could fill a library. A sizeable segment pertains to its merit. Currently, it is a debate concerning the extent to which the concept can be viably implemented. The reality is that we are striving toward an inclusive society. The concept defines a pervasive, social, political and educational philosophy. This is a laudable direction to pursue. Our *NL Pathways Model* of education was developed in the spirit of inclusivity.

Associated concepts such as multi-intelligence, response-to-intervention, and universal curriculum have generated a plethora of professional development literature. These are central elements when teachers discuss relevant approaches to Individual Education Program (IEP) development and curriculum differentiation.

This article addresses a facet of inclusion which is often overlooked, but is a functional requisite to success. Without it, inclusion can only be an illusion. It is *about fitting in psychologically* – about "personship", belonging, acceptance and self-esteem. Individuals who are at-risk or have special needs often receive negative feedback and their self-concepts are probably poorer on the average.

The following segment of this article presents pragmatic advice to help ensure a "goodness-of-fit" when children with special needs enter or transition to an inclusive classroom. Together the guidelines will help to build a psychological scaffold.

Thirty Guidelines

• Welcome! Welcome! Welcome!

Make the classroom a welcoming place from the outset. Within the first day or two the teacher must reach out and speak to each child in an encouraging friendly manner. Smiling, eye-contact and verbal greeting must be extended. Students *will* notice!

• Expect Differences

Your inclusive class must recognize that students with special needs are not a chain of paper dolls. Masking differences is not the required direction: *The goal has never been to become oblivious to children's individual differences. Within the field of multicultural education, the goal of "color blindness" (of not noticing differences) has been discredited and replaced by models that acknowledge and support the development of positive self-identity for diverse groups. Similarly, the goal of inclusion in schools is to create a world in which all people are knowledgeable about and supportive of all other people, and that goal is not achieved by some false image of homogeneity in the name of inclusion.*

• Chart An Inclusionary Course

The prevailing philosophy will serve as both the foundation and stepping-stone to inclusion. For example, in Laureen Rankin's third-grade class, a picture of each student was framed in a decorated star and hung in the classroom. Attached to each star were lists of self and teacher-identified strengths and abilities. In addition, all students were encouraged to recognize their fellow students' abilities (which were added to the appropriate star).

• Develop Disability Awareness

All students and school staff need to have an understanding of disabilities and the special needs that they can create. This will help to plan activities that foster inclusion. Notwithstanding the fact that young people have an amazing capacity for acceptance of differences and tend to see students with disabilities as people first, students in general education classes also need information regarding how to interact effectively with their peers with disabilities.

• Open the Books

Children's literature is one of the most powerful tools for assisting students to comprehend interpersonal differences and experience the human condition from a wide variety of perspectives. Many children's books deal explicitly with issues that children with disabilities must confront. Reading to the class (or students reading on their own) and later discussing or acting out the roles of the characters in the book would help both children with and without disabilities.

• The Power of Peers: Teach Concern for Each Other

Students must learn that they are responsible for themselves and for each other. As a teacher you have a role in promoting the social acceptance of children with disabilities. Carefully framed questions by the teacher can help move the process along. As an example: "Molly needs a little help completing her writing project. Who is going to help her?" Metaphorically, students can "be their brothers' keepers."

• With Due Respect

Respect generates respect. It is the writers' view that the child's survival as a psychologically intact being is more important than the acquisition of academic skills. The teacher, particularly in the early school years, has the power to provide feelings of security or to intensify insecurity. The phrase "teacher says" is used frequently to finalize a point of controversy or cap a family argument. The teacher's approval is so important that her potential for enhancing self-esteem is nothing less than amazing.

• Patience, The Guiding Virtue

Teacher impatience is devastating. It is the stuff of emotional abuse. An undergraduate student at Memorial University defined emotional abuse as follows: *It is abuse that causes a person to hurt on the inside. It is a gut-wrenching feeling, as if you are descending into a pit of worthlessness. They take a piece of you away every day.*

Ignore negative behavior when this is feasible. It is best to begin each day anew – do not carry disciplinary actions from one day to the next. Try to catch children being good, doing things right. Avoid overreacting to negative behavior. Patience is a requirement rather than a luxury. Teachers must learn to reconstruct frustration and channel anger in directions which do not involve children.

• Form *Your Own* Impressions

Cumulative files are not gospel truth, although they contain much useful information. However, it is vital to leave latitude for your own impressions, intuition, and experience concerning students' intelligence and behaviour. A "clean slate" is a chance that many students have not had. They will notice a very positive difference between you as a teacher and some other teachers from previous years. Use your own observations in these early days of school to see how each child is functioning. Sometimes in a new environment, children will be anxious and not able to implement the capacities they already have. Parents can tell you how the child functions at home, helping you to understand if he is exercising all of his capabilities at school.

• Are You Listening?

Eleanor Craig, a special education teacher, wrote a fascinating book entitled *P.S. Your Not Listening*. The title was occasioned by a classroom incident. She was busily attending to classroom procedures while one of her students was having little success in trying to gain her attention. At the end of the day, after the students had vacated, she discovered a note on her desk. It read: "P.S. your not listening." Sometimes the child with the most questions asks the fewest! Listen and prompt with sensitivity.

• Reward Positive Behavior x 10

It is difficult to provide too much positive reinforcement and acknowledgement for desirable behaviors. Spend a lot of time telling children what they do that is right. Send home "good news" notes so that parents can reinforce the child's efforts in the inclusive setting. Self-worth will increase like a geometric progression.

• Reinforce a Wide Variety of Behaviors

If praise and reinforcement are linked only to academic achievement, some children will go months without a word of encouragement. Notice good manners, a friendly smile, a kind comment, an attempt to share – all these things deserve affirmation. Take time to find things that are reinforceable, particularly in the case of students who are struggling academically. Achievement in extracurricular activities presents an opportunity.

• The Real You

One must decide whether to conceal her authentic self or to enter into a more meaningful relationship with students. Too often passive children acquiesce on the class perimeter. Find time to chat informally, possibly during the noon-hour lunch break. Step out of the more formal aspects of the teacher role. Perhaps the child is trying to find an answer to a pressing question. Be honest and open or else the student will stop asking. Talk about new babies, hockey, and interesting novels. The notice of a Brownie badge may cement a relationship of trust. Know the student as an individual with feelings, attitudes and emotions.

• Dignify Risk-taking

It is crucial that the teacher does not rely on the same handful of students to answer all the questions. One should not call upon students just because they definitely will know the correct answer. It is all about feeling comfortable about your effort – a chance to demonstrate what you know without feeling demeaned. The probability of a behavior being

repeated depends upon its consequences. Allow the child to attempt things which might be reasonably within his/her abilities.

• Let It Percolate

In an inclusive classroom the range of student abilities can be astonishing. Following a question, teachers should wait at least five full seconds for students to respond. Students with learning disabilities sometimes need to do twice the processing because they must process the question before they can think of the answer. Those few extra seconds can increase involvement by a large percentage.

• Emphasize Best Efforts

Students must realize that it is not a matter of necessarily having the "correct" answer in every instance. They must not see being incorrect as a *"bad" thing*. Remind them that teachers make mistakes as well. This will boost their confidence and signal that trying is of primary importance. Avoid using tangible rewards – such as stars and stickers – in situations where some students will never earn one. Minimize anxiety about errors by conveying confidence that together you will find ways to overcome the difficulties.

• Skew Feedback Positively

Positive feedback must be ascendant. All too often when evaluating written assignments or verbal responses, negative aspects are highlighted. When negative aspects of student work must be pointed out, the tone must be positive and constructive. Never accuse. Find points to compliment.

• Encourage Success Rather Than Winning

Too often children are placed in the precarious position of competing with their classmates. Although some professionals justify competition as a motivator, many children do not benefit from an environment which stresses the value of winning. Participation for its own sake is a more reasonable approach. One need not be first in order to enjoyably participate.

• Juggle Seating

Organize the classroom seating plan so that children will realize chances for interaction. A special emphasis is required on children who experience obstacles to participation. Peer-help can be much more subtle when seating is strategically planned in an innocuous way. "Buddying up" is an established technique to instill confidence in the special needs child. Familiar and proven. Students without disabilities are in most instances willing to help their friends. Peer tutors provide extra help.

• Help with Transitions

Self-esteem is all about fitting in smoothly. Transitions are particularly difficult for newly included children. It is important to prepare for changes in routine (e.g., a field trip or a substitute teacher). Change in schedules should be clearly communicated in advance. It is important to limit the type and number of new situations encountered at any one time. As well, adequate time must be allowed between activities in order for the child to organize himself.

• Small → Larger Groups

Children in inclusive classrooms need to develop certain abilities before they are able to work together in large groups. Since many children are not ready to interact with each other, it's important to work with them in small groups until they gain confidence. Smaller group sizes are associated with improved student outcomes, especially for students with disabilities. Later, choose cooperative learning projects to further help students learn to develop social relationships.

• Consider Class Meetings

An opportunity for inclusion is much the same from primary to secondary levels. Basically, start the class meeting by forming a circle so that everyone can see everyone else. The change from the regular class seating structure reminds students that this is a special time – a time for recognition, compliments and appreciation.

• Organization, It's Vital

It is important to remain organized. It is crucial to make things predictable and stable in an inclusive class. Without organization the entire class can become chaotic. Establish comfortable routines. Being organized is one of the top ranked attributes assigned to effective teachers.

• Not Just the Gifted

Students know when teachers prefer particular students, even when teachers go out of their way to disguise this Information. Be careful not to focus attention on brighter students (pets and favorites) during and after class. Look for ways to connect each student's response to what you are talking about. Make eye contact with each student – not just at the brightest achievers. Call on each student at least once every day. Know a few personal things about each class member.

• Display Their Efforts

To help establish a sense of belonging, every student's work should be displayed occasionally in a considerate and purposeful rotating manner. Obviously, poor quality academic work would prove embarrassing if displayed. However, creative art work, exemplary group assignments and products, special occasion posters and festive decorations can prompt all children's sense of worthiness as they notice their work exhibited.

• A Multimodal Approach

Using a multimodal lesson approach is one of the best ways to facilitate communication. Having assignment options lets all students show off their talents. Having a mixture of reading, lectures, discussions, and multimedia presentations allows for students

with different modes of learning to acquire information and feel good about themselves. Multi intelligence theory presents a pervasive approach to underpin confidence and acceptance.

• **Be a Champion for Diversity**

Many children from diverse cultural backgrounds are entering NL classes. They must feel appreciated. Ensure that the curricula include studies which promote not only an understanding of the cultures of minority children but also mutual appreciation of both cultures. When ethnic groups are portrayed, such portrayals must not depict differences in lifestyles as undesirable and must not infer an adverse value judgement of differences. Some teachers must confront their own prejudices.

• **Create Activities that Enhance Acceptance**

Deterioration of self-esteem is the predictable result of chronic failure. Teachers can bolster self-esteem by the following: find avenues to help channel excess energy in a positive way; model, rehearse social skills; recognize partially correct responses; encourage the use of positive self-talk; have the child teach the class about something they know well; recognize success each day.

• **Zero Tolerance Vis-à-vis Abuse**

Assist in devising whole school strategies to combat emotional battering. Don't wait for bullying to take place – assume that it can take place – often directed toward vulnerable class members. Closely monitor. Include the class in anti-bullying policy development and make it clear that bullying will have your complete attention.

• **Care the Extra Mile**

When an occasion arises, extend your caring beyond the class/school. A middle school student expressed it aptly:

You spoke to me of caring, I doubted you.
You spoke to me of my self-worth, I doubted you.
You came to the hospital to visit me, I believed
everything you said.

Postscript

The question might be asked: "Will following these guidelines for psychological scaffolding ensure that all students irrespective of degree and variety of disability be successfully included?" There are too many variables to provide a guarantee. Inclusion has not one but many faces. However, without psychological support from the entire school community, the inclusion concept is doomed to bankruptcy!

Wayne Nesbit is a professor at the Faculty of Education, Memorial University. Janice Mason is a graduate of Memorial University with Special Education teaching experience in Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia.

Frank Roberts Junior High Celebrates "Ability Awareness Week"

by DENISE KING

During the week of October 4-8, students and staff at Frank Roberts Junior High participated in activities to promote Inclusion. Given the Department of Education's focus on Inclusion, the school felt it was important to create an awareness of different disabilities that are present in the school and the community. Students living with disabilities ranging from the "invisible" disabilities such as learning disabilities and mild hearing impairments to "visible" disabilities such as Down Syndrome and Cerebral Palsy were all highlighted. Rather than focusing solely on the disability, the intent was to highlight what persons living with disabilities are able to do. Opportunities were provided that allowed students to see their peers in a "normal" light and to interact without fear.

The week was designed to positively educate students about disabilities through hands on presentations and activities. Guest speakers from different community organizations were on hand to present in classes while classroom teachers supplemented this with curriculum lessons. An activity booklet for classroom teachers of Health and Religion was created to match with curriculum outcomes. The presenters included representatives from the Canadian Paraplegic Association, Coalition for Persons with Disabilities, the Autism Society, Vera Perlin, Special Olympics, Epilepsy Newfoundland and Labrador and Easter Seals.

Easter Seals set up a game of sledge hockey during lunch hour. Our students who are in wheelchairs had the opportunity to play with their peers.

Each day of the week, started with a featured "Disability of the Day". During the morning announcements, students were provided with a brief description of the disability as well as some of the common characteristics. There were "Are you able?" challenges in the gym at lunch time. These challenges tested student skills and sometimes pitted students with disabilities against able bodied students. The activities were one of the highlights of the week. The gym was full every lunch hour and student feedback was phenomenal. Some of the activities included blind free throw shooting, sledge hockey with Easter Seals and scooter basketball. Another key activity of the week was an opportunity to spend the day in a wheelchair. School council chairperson, Mr. John Smith, secured several wheelchairs from Aim Services for this purpose. On the first day, over 150 students signed up for the opportunity! All participants reported how the experience really changed their views on people who have to use wheelchairs. As one student said, "it's not as fun as I thought it would be. It must be really hard to be in a chair all day".

Homeroom 8-5 listens to morning announcements and "Disability of the Day".

On Thursday of our Ability Awareness Week, students were provided with an opportunity to participate in an interactive Career Fair. Thanks to Ms. Michelle Park, our Career Development Liaison Officer, presenters from College of the North

Atlantic, Woodford's Training Centre, Academy Canada, Eastern Health, Conception Bay South Fire Department, Memorial University, and members of UA local 740 were on site with interactive, fun activities for students. The presenters highlighted the skills and training required for some careers and also did demonstrations. It was a fun day!

The week ended with a celebration assembly. Bringing in the Ability Awareness banner, were members of our pervasive needs class followed by a slide show presentation of photos from the week. Grade 8 student Luke Kennedy (diagnosed with Down Syndrome) also presented his speech entitled "What do you see when you look at me?"

Our children with pervasive needs were involved in all the activities during the week. They are shown here engaging in an environmental project.

In keeping with the Frank Roberts Junior High, Raven Roles program, the goal of the week had been to increase respect and tolerance and to promote a safer and more caring school community. Over the course of the week, more students began to visit our pervasive needs classroom to eat lunch and read books to students and there were more conversations around what living with a disability must be like. Students and staff learned a lot from the experience and we will definitely plan another event real soon.

Thanks to all of those individuals who helped make this week such a success!!

Denise King is School Counsellor at Frank Roberts Junior High in Conception Bay South.

The Global Education Initiative

A New Global Perspective For Our Classrooms

by BETH PEDDLE

Meet Jessica. She is a 22-year-old Newfoundlander, who recently graduated from an International Studies and Modern Languages program, and is currently in her first year of a Masters program in London, England. Upon graduation from Bishops College five years ago, Jessica had a thirst for an international knowledge and understanding, the kind of global context that, she felt, the province's high school curriculum did not adequately provide.

Meet Erin. Upon convocation from a Bachelor of Arts at Memorial, Erin has chosen to continue her studies in an International Development Masters Program at the University of Ottawa. As a high school student in Holy Heart of Mary, Erin was interested in global issues, but pursued this interest on a primarily extra-curricular level, given the lack of global, current content in the high school curriculum.

However, instead of simply looking for ways to learn about global issues, these youth, along with numerous others, decided to channel their passion for global affairs into an organization that could help youth across Newfoundland and Labrador connect with these issues. These two young people are members of the Global Education Initiative (GEI), an organization that was founded in 2009 by a group of university students who sought to promote global education, social justice and active citizenship throughout the education system of Newfoundland and Labrador.

While this group may still be young, their enthusiasm and hard work has already led to some significant results. This organization is pleased to be working with the provincial government, local schools, and numerous organizations and societies within the province with a global or multicultural mandate.

Throughout their work, the GEI has come to realise that teachers are the most powerful vehicles with which to engage youth. They have recently begun directing many of their projects towards teacher engagement, given that educators have the greatest opportunity and the most direct link to the student population. In their efforts to engage Newfoundland and Labrador, the GEI feels that their programming – whether it be resource development, outreach, research, etc. – can be hugely enriched with input from today's educators. With that being said, the GEI is eager to engage with as many educators as possible throughout the province, and have developed a number of opportunities for collaboration. Here is a look into some of the programs the Global Education Initiative has in the making this year.

Resource Development and High School Outreach

One of the GEI's many approaches to outreach is through guest presentations. This semester they are partnering with the Canada World Youth volunteer program to deliver presentations for the Grade Six World Cultures and the 2201 Career Development Course. The World Cultures Presentation brings cultural studies to a new level, identifying some aspects of poverty and human rights on a level that greatly enriches the curriculum and broadens the grade six students' perspective of the world and its diversity. The second, aimed at students in the Career Development course, is a look at the opportunities for Newfoundland and Labrador students to study international issues, as well as how they can volunteer and work abroad. If you would like to incorporate one of these presentations into your class or would like to learn more about the initiative, please contact the GEI at melissak@globaleducationinitiative.ca.

Secondly, the Resource Development aspect of this committee is happy to be working on the new course in Ethics and Social Justice 2106. They are currently in the stage of meeting with Ethics teachers, and any party that is interested in the shaping of this course, to discuss a strategy for formulating the most effective resources. Once the resources are complete, they will be given the official stamp of endorsement from the Department of Education and distributed to educators across the province. To contribute to this resource development effort, please contact the GEI at bethp@globaleducationinitiative.ca.

Research, Public Outreach and Advocacy
As part of its work, this Committee has begun a Resource Development Project. Both long-term and large-scale, the project seeks to bring together information on educational resource development from a variety of sources including government, community groups, and experts in pedagogy, with the goal of understanding how to best go about bringing global education to classrooms across the province. The success of this project banks on research, specifically, hearing from as many stakeholders as possible, including: teachers, government, community groups and other NGOs. If teachers would like to contribute their invaluable insight, please contact andrewh@globaleducationinitiative.ca.

The NL Guide to "Glocal"
The *NL Guide to Glocal* is the new and popular bi-weekly newsletter for students, educators, and the general public. It features everything global that is happening locally, from local events to employment and job opportunities. Most notably, each edition includes a Teacher's Corner resource and a showcase of one of the province's many Glocal citizens – often young student role models. The latest edition of the Guide is available at www.globaleducationinitiative.ca. If you are interested in receiving these biweekly newsletters or contributing the stories of noteworthy students, conferences, and other opportunities, do not hesitate to get in touch with Jessica at jessicab@globaleducationinitiative.ca.

Despite only being in its second year of existence, the Global Education Initiative has already made significant ground with global content promotion and education in high schools and on campus. This student-led initiative hopes to become a household (or perhaps classroom) name in the province, and seeks to enrich educational citizenship opportunities in our province for many years to come. However, this organization recognizes that none of its efforts can be meaningful unless they resonate with and reflect the needs and opinions of educators in our province. The GEI hopes that its resources will be of use to educators province-wide, and are actively seeking feedback and collaboration with as many educators as possible. For more information, please visit www.globaleducationinitiative.ca, or contact info@globaleducationinitiative.ca.

Beth Peddle is a second year student in French and Communication at Memorial. She has been volunteering for social justice organizations such as War Child Canada, Oxfam Canada and the Global Education Initiative since she was 13-years-old. Beth hopes to become an educator herself, and to inspire young students to pursue a global education!

The Bechdel Test

by EMMANUELLE ERNY-NEWTON

Next time you are watching a movie, ask yourself this easy three-part question:
1. Are there at least two female characters…
2. …who talk to each other about…
3. …subjects other than men?

This test is called the Bechdel Test, named after its creator, Alison Bechdel. It originated from her comic *Dykes to Watch Out For* (www.dykestowatchoutfor.com/the-essential-dtwof) in a 1985 strip called "The Rule" (http://alisonbechdel.blogspot.com/2005/08/rule.html). The series, which debuted in 1983, was one of the first to show lesbians in popular culture.

At first glance, the test may make you smile: how could a movie not meet these three easy rules? Look back at the most recent movies you have watched: in my case, *Angels and Demons* and *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time*. These movies don't even have enough female characters to get past the first part of the question. Perhaps *Sherlock Holmes*? This movie passes the first part of the question, but then none of the female characters interact with each other. What about *Avatar*? Two of its central characters are female, but when ever they talk to each other it's always about the men in the film.

Jennifer Kesler (http://thehathorlegacy.com/why-film-schools-teach-screenwriters-not-to-pass-the-bechdel-test/) recounts that when she was a film student at UCLA, she was encouraged by her professors to apply certain rules to her screenplays. "I had to understand that the audience only wanted white, straight, male leads. (…) I could still offer groundbreaking characters of other descriptions (fascinating, significant women, men of color, etc.) – as long as they didn't distract the audience from the white men they really paid their money to see."

After multiple attempts at screenplays using that style (conventional heroes and interesting, atypical supporting characters), there was still something wrong: "My scripts had multiple women with names. Talking to each other. About something other than men." Why would this be a problem? She was told "audiences weren't interested in women talking about whatever it is women talk about."

So the reason we get the same movies over and over is because of us, the audience. The strange thing is, there are plenty of movies featuring female leads that aren't box office flops: *Alien*, *Terminator*, and *Silence of the Lambs* are just three examples. As for the "white hero" prerequisite, Will Smith and Eddie Murphy, as the third and fourth highest paid actors in Hollywood in 2009, surely don't fit that mould. (www.forbes.com/2009/06/09/movies-sandler-depp-business-media-hollywood.html)

So why would movie makers want to go against their own financial interests? According to Kesler, this reaction is similar to American restaurant owners who refused to serve black clients: they were willing to hurt their businesses in order to protect their belief system. The difference is that Hollywood has a much bigger cultural influence, which means that the beliefs held by people within the movie industry – even if they're mistaken – are perpetuated.

This is where the Bechdel test becomes a particularly interesting educational study of current media: it's short and sweet and more palatable than a long (dis)course about sexual stereotypes. Think of it as a media literacy lesson made up of just three lines, so easy to explain that it can become automatic when watching movies and so fun that it can spread virally.

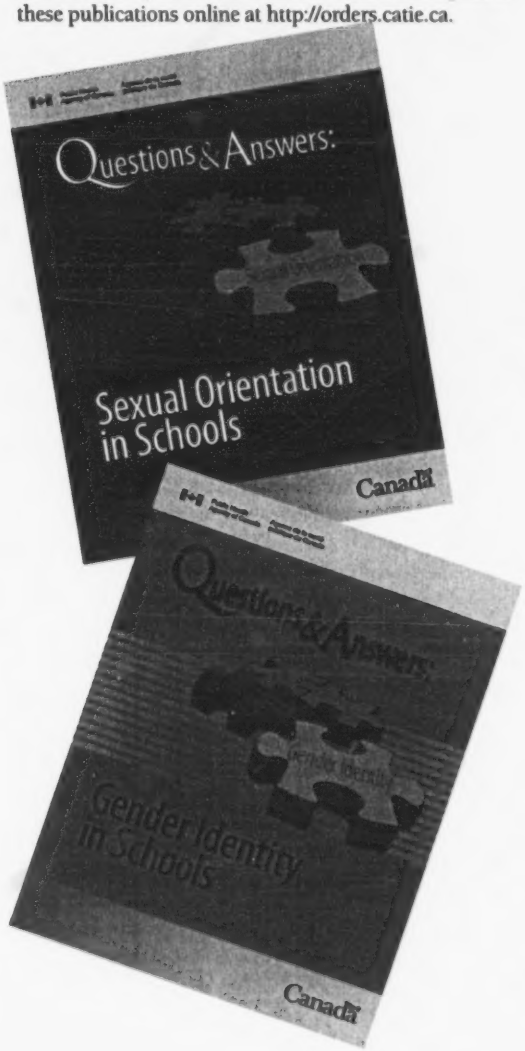
The other day, my 9-year-old daughter wanted to watch *Amélie*, which she hadn't yet seen. The story is magnificent and particularly poignant for a young girl her age. At the end of the movie, I asked her if she had liked it. Her response: "Very much so! And at least this one passed the Bechdel test!"

Emmanuelle Erny-Newton is a Media Education Specialist with the Media Awareness Network.

RESOURCES

RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

The following FREE, BILINGUAL resources have been reviewed and recommended by NLTA's Equity Issues in Education Committee, a group of teachers with various assignments covering most areas of curriculum and all levels, primary – high school. In all cases they would be excellent teacher resources, and could also be used by older students. You can order copies of these publications online at http://orders.catie.ca.



Calendar

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' COUNCIL ANNUAL CONFERENCE & AGM

May 18-20, 2011

Terra Nova Park Lodge. "Leading and Learning Together". Featured Speaker: Dr. J. Tim Goddard, Dean, Faculty of Education, UPEI. For more information visit www.cdli.ca/sac2011/sac2011.html.

2011 NATIONAL STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

September 27 - October 1, 2011

Corner Brook. Corner Brook Regional High will play host to 1,000 student delegates as well as up to 250 teacher delegates for a week-long conference entitled "A New Found Energy". For information on the conference and Call for Presenters visit www.cslc2011.ca.

COSS WORKSHOP: BARBARA COLOROSO LECTURES

October 7, 2011

COSS proudly presents international bestselling author and speaker Barbara Coloroso. She will be presenting two lectures: "Just Because It's Not Wrong Doesn't Make It Right: Teaching Students to Think and Act Ethically" and "The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander." Registration opens April 1, 2011. Workshop information will be posted on the NLTA website (www.nlta.nl.ca) by January 1, 2011. For more information contact Keith Adey (709) 489-6481 or keithadey@nf.sympatico.ca

2010-11 Convention and Province-Wide Vote Deadlines

December 8, 2010

- All nominations for Office of President/Vice-President must be postmarked by this date for publication in Election issue of *The Bulletin*.
- Photograph, biographical sketch and election statement of nominees for Office of President/Vice-President must be postmarked by this date for publication in Election issue of *The Bulletin*.

January 4, 2011

Deadline for mailing of election posters to schools.

January 8, 2011

Mailing of Election issue of *The Bulletin*.

January 9, 2011

Final deadline for receipt of nominations for Offices of President and Vice-President.

January 27, 2011

Proposed change, amendment or repeal of NLTA By-Laws to be actioned by Convention must be presented in writing to the NLTA.

February 8, 2011

Province-wide vote for the election of President and Vice-President.

February 22, 2011

Run-off ballot for the election of President and Vice-President (if required).

February 27, 2011

- All nominations for Provincial Executive for publication in Convention issue of *The Bulletin* must be postmarked or hand delivered to NLTA Office.
- Names of elected delegates and alternates to Convention should be forwarded to NLTA Office for printing in Convention issue of *The Bulletin*.
- Resolutions to Convention must be received at the NLTA Office.

March 27, 2011

Mailing of Convention issue of *The Bulletin*.

April 27-29, 2011

Biennial General Meeting

April 28, 2011

Final deadline for receipt of nominations for Provincial Executive.

Dates to Remember

January 2011

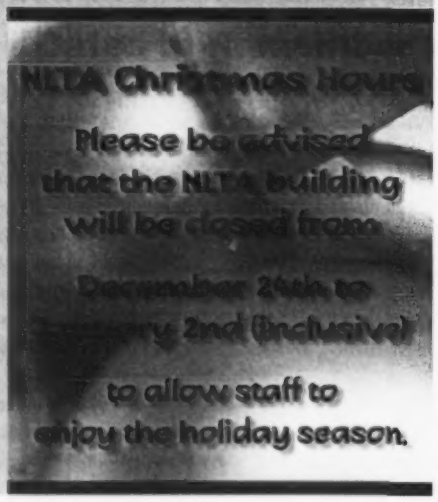
Jan 15	**Deadline:** 2011 Christmas Card Contest entries
Jan 15	**Deadline:** Receipt of nominations for Barnes, Bancroft, Allan Bishop and Special Recognition Awards
Jan 20	**Deadline:** PD Fund Applications

February 2011

Feb 1	**Deadline:** Applications for Educational Leave - teachers must make prior application to school board
Feb 14	Janeway Day in the Schools

March 2011

Mar 6-12	Education Week
Mar 17	Deadline: Professional Development Fund applications
Mar 31	Board Deadline: Notice for retirement at end of school year
Mar 31	Deadline: Centennial Study Award Applications
Mar 31	Deadline (on or before March 31): International Conference Presenters Program Applications


NLTA Christmas Hours
Please be advised that the NLTA building will be closed from December 24th to January 2nd (inclusive) to allow staff to enjoy the holiday season.